

Amendments to the Drawings:

The original drawing FIG. 4 has been amended to now include a second handle, as described in the specification. Accordingly, the attached drawing sheet replaces the original drawing sheet.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. Applicant would also like to thank the Examiner for the time provided to this application. The application has been carefully amended to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

By the present amendment, claims 1-9 and 11 are amended, claim 12 is newly added, and FIG. 4 is amended. As such, it is now respectfully submitted that each of the claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance.

FIG. 4 is amended to show a handle bar with two handles. The specification on page 3, lines 5-7, states that "the blower tube is either provided with one single handle or a handle bar comprising two handles. If a handle bar is used, one handle is placed on one side of the blower tube and the other on the opposite side according to the claimed invention." Thus, the specification provides support for two handles being provided, where one is located on "one side of the blower tube and the other on the opposite side." Thus, the amendment to the drawings is supported and no new matter has been entered.

The specification is amended to include section headings. The specification has also been amended to comply with the other informalities listed in the Office action on pages 5-6.

Claim 2 is objected to for failing to limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Claim 2 is now amended to recite structure for the handle. In light of this amendment, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8 are objected to due to informalities in that the claims each refer to a "handle or handles." The claims have been amended to recite "at least one handle." Having at least one handle is supported in the specification, such as by the paragraph on page 3, lines 5-7, which states that states that "the blower tube is either provided with one single handle or a handle bar comprising two handles. If a handle bar is used, one handle is placed on one side of the blower tube and the other on the opposite side according to the claimed invention." In light of the specification and the amendments to the claims, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 11 are objected to due to informalities in that the claims each refer to a "longitudinal axle." The claims have been amended to recite a "longitudinal axis." In light of these amendments, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 4 is objected to for being unclear. Claim 4 is now amended to recite the limitation suggested by the Examiner. In light of this amendment, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 7 is objected to. The objection has become moot due to the amendment of the claim.

Claim 11 is objected to for including the word "released." Claim 11 is now amended to recite the word "loosened," as suggested by the Examiner. In light of this amendment, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over Takahashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,083,340) be withdrawn. It is respectfully suggested that the Takahashi reference does not teach or suggest each of the elements recited in the amended claims. Claim 1 now recites that "the at least one handle (10) is placed on an arm (21) that extends in a substantially perpendicular direction from the blower tube; further characterized in that a longitudinal axis (A) of the handle (20) is placed outside the circumference of the stiff section (15) of the blower tube (13) when seen in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the stiff section (15) of the blower tube (13)." Takahashi does not teach or suggest each of the elements of claim 1. For example, Takahashi does not disclose or suggest a handle placed on an arm that extends in a perpendicular direction from the blower tube. Even if the portion between the grip 13 and the connection 11 is considered to be an arm or a curved arm, as asserted on page 11 of the Office action, this section still does not extend in a substantially perpendicular direction from the blower tube. The handle of Takahashi extends in a radial direction from the blower tube, no matter which position the handle can be placed in. Moreover, Takahashi does not disclose or suggest that the "longitudinal axis of the handle is placed outside the circumference of the stiff section of the blower tube when seen in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the stiff section of the blower tube," as recited in claim 1. For example, even if the handle of Takahashi were to remain in the position shown in FIG. 1, Takahashi does not have structure equivalent to where an arm extends in a perpendicular direction, as the

portion that the Office action asserts is the "arm" only extends in a radial direction. If the handle of FIG. 1 of Takahashi were rotated, such as to a vertical position, then the handle does not have a longitudinal axis outside the circumference of the blower tube "when seen in a plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the blower tube," as recited in claim 1. Claims 2-12 are patentable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1-2 and 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being unpatentable over Malmqvist et al. (U.S. Patent No. D481,497) be withdrawn. 102(e) states the following:

(e) the invention was described in - (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for the purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language

However, the present application is a PCT application that claims priority to 2/12/03. A certified copy of this foreign application was already filed. The relevant date for the present application is 2/12/03. The relevant date for Malmqvist under 102(e)(1) is the date the application was filed in the United States. Malmqvist was not filed until 2/19/03 in the United States which is after the priority date of 2/12/03 for the present application. Under 102(e)(2), an international application filed under "section 351(a)" has the effect of an application filed in the United States. Section 351(a) states the following: "The term 'treaty' means the Patent Cooperation Treaty done at Washington, on June 19, 1970." The Malmqvist reference claims priority to a Swedish application, but was not filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty. Thus, the Malmqvist reference still has a date of 2/19/03 under 102(e)(2) which is also after the relevant date for the present application. In light of this analysis, applicant respectfully requests that the rejection should be withdrawn as the Malmqvist reference cannot be applied under 102(e).

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. ABE1-38474.

Respectfully submitted,
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